

## Message Text

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43

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 061151Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9838

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4745

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SS SP AG MR TS

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN MEDIATION IN SAHARA DISPUTE

REF: RABAT 3711

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH FONMIN CHATTI AUGUST 5 HE  
CONFIRMED THAT TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT HAS FOR SOME MONTHS  
BEEN ENGAGED IN MEDIATING SPANISH SAHARA DISPUTE. HE  
SAID THAT AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE PREVIOUS DAY HE COULD  
NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THIS PUBLICLY SINCE TUNISIA'S MEDIATORY  
ROLE IS CLOSELY HELD.

2. CHATTI CLAIMED THAT TUNISIAN INITIATIVE COMMENCED  
WITH VISIT OF MAURETANIAN PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH ALMOST  
A YEAR AGO AND HAS CONTINUED SINCE. HE SAID FIRM AGREEMENT  
HAS NO BEEN REACHED BETWEEN MOROCCO AND MAURETANIA  
TO DIVIDE UP SPANISH SAHARA. BORDERS HAVE BEEN DRAWN  
AND THERE IS AGREEMENT WITH REGARD TO SHARING OF MINERAL  
RESOURCES. CARROT HAS BEEN OFFERED TO SPAIN IN FORM OF  
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OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN BASES IN SAHARA.

CHATTI SAID HE WOULD BE STOPPING OFF IN MADRID ON HIS WAY BACK FROM ATTENDANCE AT UNGA SPECIAL SESSION IN EARLY SEPTEMBER TO TALK FURTHER WITH SPANISH GOVERNMENT.

3. CHATTI REMARKED THAT ALGERIA'S POSITION REMAINS UNCERTAIN. DESPITE BOUTEFLIKA'S RECENT CONCILIATORY VISIT TO RABAT, ALGERIANS STILL TALK ABOUT SELF-DETERMINATION. CHATTI RIDICULED IDEA OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR "40,000 BEDOUINS WHO CONSTITUTE THE TOTAL POPULATION OF SPANISH SAHARA."

4. COMMENT: RABAT AND NOUAKCHOTT OBVIOUSLY IN BEST POSITION TO COMMENT ON VALIDITY OF CHATTI'S ASSERTION THAT DETAILS OF MOROCCAN-MAURETANIAN AGREEMENT HAVE BEEN FULLY WORKED OUT. WHILE GOT HAS CLEARLY BEEN TAKING ACTIVE INTEREST IN SPANISH SAHARA QUESTION, IT IS VERY POSSIBLE THAT TUNISIANS ARE EXAGGERATING THEIR MEDIATORY ROLE. GOT ENJOYS PLAING PART OF PEACEMAKER AND NO DOUBT RELISHES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS MIDDLEMAN. IT IS VERY LIKELY THAT PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA DISCUSSED SPANISH SAHARA QUESTION WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE DURING THEIR MEETING TWO WEEKS AGO IN ALGERIA, AND SECRETARY OF STATE KOOL'S RECENT VISIT TO MADRID MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN IN THIS CONTEXT.  
SEELYE

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